

THE IRAQI FULBRIGHT PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

I. APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM

A. Eligibility and Application Process

If I am an Iraqi citizen living outside of Iraq, can I apply?

No. The scholarship is available to Iraqi citizens who are currently living in Iraq.

Who should I contact during the Fulbright application process?

In the first instance, review the comprehensive information available on the Fulbright Iraq website at <http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/fulbright.html>. If your questions are not answered, please use the Fulbrightiraq@state.gov e-mail address to pose questions.

If I applied in the past and was not selected, do I need to complete a full application to reapply?

Yes, you will need to reapply for the program. You may use the same documents you used in your past application, but you must resubmit them in an online application available on the U.S. Embassy website.

How are the candidates selected from the applicant pool?

Applications are judged on their merits in this open competition. They are reviewed independently by a bi-national academic selection panel comprised of Iraqis and Americans.

B. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

Do I need to take the TOEFL test?

Yes, you need a TOEFL or ITP TOEFL score in order to apply for the Fulbright Program. If selected as a candidate, you will need to take the official TOEFL exam for university placement purposes.

What is the difference between the Institutional TOEFL and the Official TOEFL test?

The Institutional TOEFL test or ITP is often used as a practice test for the Official TOEFL exam and gives an approximate indication of English language ability. The Official TOEFL test is more precise at measuring language ability and U.S. universities require an Official TOEFL test from every candidate before they can be considered for admission. More information about how to register for the test and where it is offered can be found at the AMIDEAST website at <http://www.amideast.org/offices/iraq/default.htm>

Is there a minimum TOEFL score requirement to apply for a Fulbright grant?

As you will be competing for admission to U.S. graduate school against academically able students from around the world as well as from the United States, there is a

minimum score of 550 to have a competitive application. In some fields of study, a higher TOEFL score is expected to be competitive.

C. Field of Study

How important is the selection of my intended field of study?

You should carefully select your intended field of study. The field of study you indicate on your application is the field of study you will pursue in the U.S. and cannot be changed. U.S. university web sites provide a wealth of information for interested applicants to see how their proposed field of study is described and taught at U.S. graduate schools. Your proposed field of study may be called a different name or be housed in a different department than you are used to within the educational system in Iraq. Time invested in describing your proposed field of study clearly and accurately will greatly assist placement officials in identifying the best possible "fit" or course of study match for your academic background.

Can I get a Fulbright Scholarship to study medicine?

No. But, applications to study all aspects of public health will be considered.

D. Supplemental Forms

All supplemental forms must be completed except for the **Transcript Release Form** (unless you have attended post-secondary school in the United States). These forms should be submitted electronically to fulbrightiraq@state.gov.

It is preferred that the **Report on Proficiency in English** be completed, however, it is not mandatory.

II. SELECTION

When will I hear whether or not I am a candidate?

The Fulbright Program Office of the U.S. Embassy, Baghdad receives approximately 300 applications from March through May. After reviewing all the applications, the Fulbright Program Office will contact candidates who have been chosen as semifinalists for an interview. Interviews will be scheduled during June and July.

How will I know if I am chosen as a Fulbright Grantee?

You will be notified of your status as a Principal or Alternate candidate, or that you were not selected after the technical and academic review process are completed approximately in September.

Once designated as a principal or alternate, your candidacy is still contingent on having a "G" or "H" numbered Iraqi passport, acquiring a valid J Visa, being successfully admitted to a U.S. college or university (via a placement organization, not on your own), and receiving approval from the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Once these requirements are fulfilled, you will be offered your Fulbright Grant for your approval and signature.

III. PREPARING FOR YOUR FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

A. Travel and Documentation

When should I be prepared to leave Iraq and travel to the U.S.?

Most grantees will travel to the U.S. in July for a short Fulbright pre-academic program. However, some grantees may need to arrive in the U.S. as early as May to take some preparatory classes relevant to their field of study. You will be notified by the Fulbright Office in Baghdad if you are expected to arrive in the U.S. early.

What about my passport?

All Fulbright grantees will need a G or H Iraqi passport. S Passports are no longer accepted for travel to the United States. Ideally, your passport should be valid six (6) months beyond the end date of your Master's degree program, which is usually two years in duration. At a minimum, your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after your intended arrival in the United States.

Can I travel internationally during my Fulbright grant period?

Yes, you are able to travel outside of the U.S. during vacation periods at your institution while you are on the Fulbright Program. Please note that you will need to have a valid J-1 entry visa for returning to the U.S. to continue in your studies and that it may take considerable time to obtain an updated visa. The Fulbright Program is unable to assist you with the process of renewing your J-1 visa.

B. Dependents

Are dependents allowed on the Fulbright Program?

No, dependents are not allowed on the Iraq Fulbright Program so it is imperative that you discuss this issue with your family and that you prepare yourself for this time away.

C. Visa/Grant Extension or Transfer

Can I extend my grant or transfer visa sponsorship upon completion of my Fulbright Scholarship? No, Participants on the Iraq Fulbright Program are unable to extend their grants and may not transfer their visa sponsorship in order to continue study in the U.S. All Iraqi Fulbright participants must return home immediately upon the completion of their Fulbright grant.

D. Intention to Return to Iraq

I want to apply for a residency in another country/asylum in the U.S., will I be eligible to receive my grant? No, Your eligibility for a Fulbright grant is based, in part, on your intention to return to Iraq immediately following your program. If you show an intent *other than* to remain in the U.S. for a *temporary, specific, limited period* (such as applying for an immigrant visa to the U.S., asylum in the U.S., or residency in a country other than Iraq) you will be ineligible to receive (or continue receiving, if you have already begun) the Fulbright grant. *Please carefully review the J visa policies at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html#3 for further information.*

